

Church of the Holy Spirit
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023 - 7:00 pm



Gathering Hymn:

"The First Nowell"

Hymnal 109 (v.1-3)

Welcome

The Peace

Celebrant: The Peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Bidding Prayer

Celebrant: Sing to the Lord a new song!

People: **Sing to the Lord, all the earth!**

Celebrant: For great is the Lord

People: **And greatly to be praised**

Celebrant: We who walked in darkness

People: **Have seen a great light.**

Celebrant: Glory to God in the highest heaven!

People: **And on earth, peace!**

Celebrant: For unto us is born this day in the city of David

People: **A savior,**

Celebrant: Who is the Messiah,

People: **The Lord.**

Celebrant: Authority rests on his shoulders, and he is called:

People: **Wonderful Counselor**

Celebrant: Mighty God

People: **Prince of peace.**

Celebrant: His authority will grow continually,

People: **And in his kingdom will be endless peace.**

Celebrant: We exalt him with our voices.

People: **We exalt him with our hands.**

Celebrant: We exalt him in word and thought.

People: **We exalt him in actions that make for peace.**

Celebrant: Let the heavens be glad!

People: **Let the earth rejoice!**

Celebrant: For the grace of God has appeared,

People: **Bringing salvation to all.**

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Choir

*Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.
Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
giving a promise of safety and worth.*

*Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn
Telling the world that the Savior is born
Love is a flame that burns in our hearts
Jesus has come and will never depart*

Congregational Refrain

Responsive Litany

Tonight, we mark the end of the anticipation and the beginning of the greatest story

Hallelujah, Christ is born!

Our hopes have become reality. We walk into the light.

Hallelujah, Christ is born!

Let peace reign throughout the world. Let our hearts find calm.

Hallelujah, Christ is born!

May we feel the joy of his coming, long after this season ends.

Hallelujah, Christ is born!

Love has come down from heaven and is all around us.

Hallelujah, Christ is born!

Tonight, we light all the candles. The first for hope, the second for peace, the third to show our joy, and the fourth to remind us of the love that fills this place. And now, we light the Christ Candle, symbolizing how Jesus adds to the combined light of the wreath to embrace the hope, peace, joy, and love that he will bestow on the entire world

Congregational Refrain

Clery offers closing prayer.

Gracious Jesus, you are with us now and we will never let you go. Help us to keep faith and be your servants through the doubt and uncertainty of everyday life. Your birth has renewed our spirit; may it stay strong within us. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ our newborn King.

Amen

Hymn

People Look East

WLP 724 (v1 & 5)

Congregational Refrain

When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be
first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall
be a - fraid, none shall be a - fraid.

Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (9: 2-7)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Bell Choir

Carol of the Bells

arranged by: Samuel Stokes

A Reading from the Gospel according to Luke (2: 1-7)

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Bell Choir

O Come all ye Faithful

Dean McIntyre

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (2: 8-20)

Glory to you Lord Christ

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night, Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will Find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So, they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and

all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Homily

The Rev. Thomas Jones

Please stand.

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures,
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son,
he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Reader: Good and gracious God, on this holy night you gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Savior of all, lying in a manger. On this holy night, you draw us into the mystery of your love, joining our voices with the heavenly host, that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds, that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, God forever and ever.

People: **Amen**

Reader: On this holy night in which God joins heaven and earth, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Let us pray for the Church around the world as it celebrates the birth of Christ. Bless all those who are entrusted with Christian ministry, that your Word might be proclaimed with truth and courage across our world.

Bestow your wisdom on all who govern, that in honoring the earth and its diverse races, cultures, and religions, we may celebrate the light of this most holy night.

Grant reconciliation to those surrounded with conflict and violence, that they may live in the peace of this most holy night.

Let us pray for all who are cold, hungry, or alone this night. Embrace with your tender care all who wander or have no place to lay their head, that they may experience the hope of this most holy night.

Let us pray for all who are anxious, depressed, or ill. Draw near to those who find this season a source of pain or grief, and to all who are suffering or sick, especially those we remember in our own hearts that they may feel the comfort of this most holy night.

Let us pray for parents, families, and newborn infants. Strengthen families in the bonds of love and commitment, that they may delight in the joy of this most holy night.

Let us pray for ourselves and for the blessings of Christmas. Open our hearts to your presence, that we may be transformed by the new birth of this holy most night.

Let us give thanks for all the faithful departed who have been bearers of the Word made flesh. Give us grace to follow your holy ones in lives of faith and commitment, that we may join with the hosts of heaven in singing the praises of this most holy night.

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, O God, for the sake of him who came among us to show us the depth of your love, who died and rose again that we might know hope, and who now lives and reigns within the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

Confession of Sin

Reader: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you,
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in everlasting life.

Almighty God, whose will it is to hold heaven and earth in the peace of your kingdom: Give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. All this we ask through your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Offertory Hymn:

"Once in Royal David's City"

Hymnal 102 (v. 1-2, 4 & 6)

The Holy Communion

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts

People: **We lift them to the Lord**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Almighty God, you shape your very life to create and restore us forever. We gather around your altar like those who thronged your Son's manger, longing for you to reassemble men and women, kings and working people, Jews and Gentiles, heaven and earth at the place where our humanity and your divinity meet.

You had too much love to keep it to yourself; and though we took up arms against you and one another, you disarmed us in coming into our midst as a defenseless baby. As his arms were tied in swaddling clothes, so later his hands were nailed to the cross; yet you made his birth the foretaste of our redemption and his death the gateway to resurrection life.

You give us such joy and peace in your company that our hearts join the angels in the Christmas sky and around your eternal throne, singing the hymn of your unending praise.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

God of new birth, as you laid your Son in Mary's arms, you place these gifts of bread and wine in our hands. Sanctify your church to be fragile and tender and true as the infant Savior. Send down your Holy Spirit, that this bread of wheat gathered from the fields and this cup of grapes gathered from the vineyards may be for us the body and blood of your son Jesus Christ; who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, saying

"Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup, Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

"Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

God who exalts the humble and humbles the exalted, as you drew the magi to the place of your epiphany, call us to yourself, and bring your creation to its consummation. Lift your whole church, living and departed, to the vision of your glory, once made flesh in a humble family, now exalted and reigning with justice and mercy.

In this banquet restore us in your image, surround us with your company, and prepare us for your freedom, after the pattern of your Son, through whom and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant say together

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

All who are baptized are invited to receive Holy Communion. To receive a blessing without Communion, please cross your arms across your chest. Gluten free wafers are available upon request.

Hymn "What Child Is This" Blue Hymnal 115

Hymn "Away in a Manger" Blue Hymnal 101

Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant: Let us pray together.

Go with us O Lord, as we journey to the heavenly country, that following your star we may not wander in the darkness of this world's night, while you who are the true and living way shine with us to the journey's end. Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and forever more. Amen.

Blessing

Celebrant:

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness, **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh, joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

At this time, all are invited to bring out their candles for the closing hymn. During the singing of the hymn, the overhead lights will be lowered, and all are turn on and share the candlelight. Following the dismissal, we will then depart in partial darkness

Silent Night, holy night, all is calm all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child, Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Dismissal

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**



Our many poinsettias are given in praise to God and in memory, honor, and thanksgiving for loved ones.

Charlotte Austin

In Memory of my husband Hank Austin, my son David Austin, & my grandson Philip Austin.

Doug & Pam Chisam

In Memory of Gerald & Esther Bremer and Barbara Chisam
In Thanksgiving for Cole, Elic, & Silas Chisam,

Joan Carter

In Memory of James (Jim) Carter, Ken & Mae Donnenwirth, and Ray & Hazel Carter

The Caskie Family

In Memory of John & Jennie Reeve, Bob & Lou Andrews, Dave & Pat Caskie, Jill Allain, and
Dennis Andrews.
In Thanksgiving for MacKenzie Caskie.

Lora Cobbs

In Memory of Ray & Flora Ayala, Chris & Essie Cobbs, Aberdeen Cobbs
In Thanksgiving for Matt & Melissa Cobbs, Andrew Cobbs & Himaja Chinimilli

Bob and Jean Cook

In Memory of all our parents, Bob, Joan, Sally, George, and Annie.

William French

In Memory of our parents, Vernon & Jean French, Earl McMillion & Bertha Mealy
In Thanksgiving for Kathleen French

Ken Gomeringer

In Memory of Bob & Mary Gomeringer

Karen Gray

In Memory of Gary Gray
In Thanksgiving for the Miller & Devine families

Janet Herring

In Memory of Roy Herring and Margaret Clark

Susan Hedin

In Memory of Paul Hedin.

The Horejs Family

In Thanksgiving for all God's children.

Ed and Linda James

In Thanksgiving for the family and good health

Father Tom and Sharon Jones

In Thanksgiving for our family

David and Kitty KentSmith

In Memory of our parents and son.
In Thanksgiving for our daughter and her family

Carol McLaughlin

In Memory of my husband Bill and my parents.
In Thanksgiving for my wonderful & sometimes crazy family.

Leslie Nutting

In Memory of loved ones gone.

Joan & Dean Olander

In Memory of all our parents, Dorothy, Joe, Minnie, Altis, and Emma
In Thanksgiving for our children DeAnn, Joe, and Ron and our grandson, Logan.

Ted & Sue Powell

In Thanksgiving for the Gifts of the Season

Ruth and Bob Richter

In Memory of our mother Della, Bob's Aunt & Uncle Gail & Vince, and our Grandparents.
In Thanksgiving for our marriage and our two sons Bobby & William.
We are also thankful for Jack, Della, Bob, & Jackie and our whole Family

Howard Tarleton

In Memory of Pat Tarleton

Sandra Vassar

In Memory of Larry, Alice, & John Vassar and David & Kathryn Rice
In Thanksgiving for the Vassar Kids.

Jennifer Wilson

In Memory of Della Hester Lee, Jack & Ruth Lee, Arthur & Gladys Henson, John & Thelma
Hester, PL & Leona Wilson
In Thanksgiving for our family, friends church and all the blessings of this life.

Frank and Peg Zelazny

In Memory of all our family members who have gone before us to their Heavenly Home.
In Thanksgiving for all our special friends who have become family.

Holiday Office Hours

December 25	10:00 am Service
December 26	Office Closed
December 27-28	Office Open 9am-1pm
December 29	Office Open 9:00am-Noon
December 30	Normal 5pm Service
December 31	Normal 8 & 9:30 am Services
January 1	Office Closed

Coming in the New Year

Sunday School

Our Sunday morning Christian Formation program will resume on Sunday (7 Jan) at 10:45 am.

Journeys Youth

Our Wednesday evening youth group will resume meeting on Wednesday (10 Jan). The evening begins with a shared dinner at 6:30 pm, followed by small group time at 7:00 pm, and Compline at 8:00 pm. Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to stop by and check out this really fun and formational time together.

Youth Group Bingo Night

On Wednesday (24 Jan) our parish youth group (youth between the ages of 10-18) are invited to join our Journeys youth for an evening of fun, food, and fellowship. The evening will begin with dinner at 6:30 and be followed by several rounds of bingo. Our evening will include great food, wild and crazy beverages, and prizes for the winners. Please stop by the Spirit Hub and sign up by Sunday (21 Jan) so that we can plan accordingly.

Food Pantries

Our next Mobile Food pantry is scheduled for Saturday (27 Jan). If you, or someone you know is in need of grocery assistance, we will be distributing pre-packed boxes of both perishable and non-perishable items between 10:00 am and 11:30 am. Our hope is to also present each household with a box/bottle of laundry detergent. If you would like to volunteer, or help us to provide laundry detergent, please stop by the Spirit Hub and let us know.

Inquirer's Class

Our annual Inquirer's Class takes a brief look at Episcopal Church history, and explores the meaning and implication of the vows we make in our Baptismal Covenant. This year's class will meet every other Sunday at 11am starting on Sunday (21 Jan). This is an excellent opportunity for those of any age who are new to the Episcopal Church, who are considering Confirmation, or who wish to dig more deeply into who we are as faith community and as brothers and sisters in Christ. If you are interested in taking this class please stop by the Spirit Hub and let us know.

Annual Parish Meeting

Our annual parish meeting is planned for Sunday (28 Jan) beginning at 10:45 am. As usual, we will begin our meeting with a shared lunch (provided by our Vestry). During our meeting we will elect new members to the Vestry and to Diocesan Council, thank those who have served during the past year, review our successes of the last year and our challenges of the next. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us.

Note: Ministry Annual Reports are due to Jean (in the office) by Sunday, 14 Jan.

Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday

On Tuesday (13 Feb) we will hold our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner. This event is open to the public. Dinner will be served between 5 & 7 pm. Wednesday (14 Feb) is Ash Wednesday. We will offer three services on that day that will include communion and the imposition of ashes. Service times will be 9:30am, Noon, and 7:00pm.